

CONCERNS OF NINTH GRADE GIRLS FOR STUDY  
IN FAMILY RELATIONS

by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Families are not stable and simple; they have changed greatly in the past, and they are likely to change much more in the future. The patriarchal family of the Puritan fathers was, among other considerations, mainly a family of production and can be dramatically compared with the child-centered family of today's middle class which is, economically, mainly a consuming family.

Many family members are not realizing satisfaction in family living because of unreal expectations and insufficient understanding of the values held by other members of the family. With a more transient and mobile population, in which families are less bound by family traditions and contact, it is increasingly difficult for children in a family to understand the internalized attitudes and values of their parents. Moore noted that "the family has undergone modification and extension even in conception of what it is." Today's families must rely on their own resources and those of their communities for adequate functioning.<sup>1</sup>

In home economics classes there is an opportunity to meet the challenge of education for improved family living. Past efforts in teaching family relations have not always been genuinely significant. There has frequently been too wide a gap between the classroom subject

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<sup>1</sup> Bernice Milburn Moore, "Families of America—Variations on a Theme," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 48:3-4, December, 1964.

matter of family relations and the reality in which many of the students are living. Text books written for use in junior high school tend to discuss family relations problems as if the pupils were all members of intact families, experiencing few problems in communication with attentive well-adjusted parents; class discussions often indicate that from the pupil's point of view this is not the reality in which they live.

According to Klemmer, today's teaching must meet two criteria: (1) deal more realistically with the actual problems today's youth face and (2) provide definite direction in the form of value guidance which will be readily acceptable to modern young people.<sup>1</sup>

Current problems, concerns, and strengths of families should serve as the criteria in determining program emphases and course content.<sup>2</sup> In the family relations area this indicates a need for re-centering the emphasis: from teaching primarily about intact families to searching for understanding of patterns of family living in a changing society and helping pupils to recognize and accept individual and family differences.

#### THE SITUATION

Pupils at Truesdell Junior High School, Wichita, Kansas, live in widely varying family situations: from intact families to a combination

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<sup>1</sup>Richard H. Klemmer, "The Empathetic Approach to Teaching Family Relations," Journal of Home Economics, 57:619-625, October, 1965.

<sup>2</sup>Dorothy S. Lawson, "Education for Improved Family Living," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 48:15, December, 1964.

of stepparents; from condemned housing to \$25,000 homes; from families where the head of the household has no employment to those in professional occupations.

Truesdell was opened in 1956, in the southwest area of Wichita. A section of the city once known as "the bog," it is now a rapidly expanding area, with families in the socio-economic levels from welfare to middle class.

In 1961, the area directly across the street from Truesdell became an Urban Renewal Area. Families from these homes were absorbed mainly within the school district and pupils from these homes remained on the school class rolls. By 1967, twenty-eight new houses had been completed and approximately thirty more were under construction in what had been a slum, but is now Glenn Village.

First year enrollment at Truesdell was 670 pupils. In 1962, an extensive building program was completed to increase the capacity of Truesdell from 1,200 pupils to 2,400 pupils. Two school districts were annexed to the city of Wichita in this area: South Enterprise in 1962 and South Riverside in 1964. Grade schools in these newly annexed areas which had been for grades kindergarten through eight were converted to kindergarten through sixth grade, with seventh and eighth grades absorbed by Truesdell. The 1966-1967 enrollment at Truesdell was approximately 1,940 pupils. Counting those pupils enrolled in the "feeder grade schools" of the district in May, 1967, projected enrollment for the school year 1967-1968 was 2,150 pupils.

At Truesdell an informal survey of family background, conducted



by the investigator in two ninth grade homemaking classes in 1966, revealed that 15.4 per cent of the ninth grade girls were from homes broken by death, desertion, or divorce.

The curriculum guide currently in use for teaching homemaking in Wichita has not been revised for several years and the area of family relations is one which needs considerable revision to meet the needs of ninth grade pupils, especially those at Truesdell Junior High School.

#### PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study were: (1) to make a family background and interest survey of ninth grade girls enrolled in homemaking at Truesdell Junior High School, Wichita, Kansas: and (2) to plan a unit for teaching family relations in this school based on pupil needs.

Teaching and evaluation of this unit were not part of this study.

#### PROCEDURE

A questionnaire was developed to survey (1) general family situations and (2) concerns for study in the family relations subject area. The questionnaire was pretested by administration to a limited sample; minor revisions were made and the revised questionnaire was administered by the investigator during class periods to the 135 girls enrolled in the six ninth grade homemaking classes at Truesdell. Girls who were absent from school when the survey was taken cooperated by filling in the questionnaire at a later date.

In addition to the introductory comments and directions on the

questionnaire the girls were given oral instructions regarding marking of specific items. It was stressed that the questionnaire was not a test and, since the papers would not have names on them, identification of an individual family would be impossible. That the girls had followed the request to mark each question was evident when all of the questionnaires were considered usable by the investigator.

The responses to each of the thirty-eight items on the questionnaire were tallied; and the data summarized, analyzed and reported in Chapter III.

The findings were used in planning a revised unit for family relations for ninth grade pupils at Truesdell. The developed unit consisted of areas of concern, objectives, generalizations, and learning experiences. The unit is found in Chapter IV.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As background for this study selected readings were made of (1) changing functions of the family, (2) changes affecting the American family, and (3) teaching of family relations in home economics.

#### CHANGING FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY

The family is basic to all types of social organization; it is the institution which concerns itself with the various statuses and roles involved in kinship organization. In tracing the functions of the family it is apparent that authorities have not always agreed on the basic roles of the family.

In 1927, Groves, a pioneer in the systematic study of the family, outlined four basic roles: the protection and care of the young, the regulation of sex, the perpetuation of the culture, and the meeting of the needs for intimate contacts.<sup>1</sup> The following year Ogburn named six basic functions: the affectional, the economic, the recreational, the religious, the educational, and the protective.<sup>2</sup> The greatest number of functions of the family was seen by Ninkoff when, in 1934, he added to Ogburn's list the control of environment, the provision of security, and

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<sup>1</sup>Ernest R. Groves, Social Problems of the Family, pp. 1-5, 55-65.

<sup>2</sup>William F. Ogburn, "Social Heritage and the Family," Family Life Today, pp. 1-31.

the enlargement of experience.<sup>1</sup> By 1945, Burgess and Locke reduced the functions to seven: economic, educational, protective, recreational, affectional, religious, and cultural.<sup>2</sup> Ackerman proposed six purposes of the family in 1958: the opportunity to evolve a personal identity; the provision of social togetherness; the provision of food, shelter, and other physical necessities; the patterning of sexual roles; the training toward integration into social roles; and the cultivation of learning.<sup>3</sup>

In 1961, Kephart claimed that "radical changes have occurred in most of the historic roles of the family, shifting responsibility for these to other agencies outside the home."<sup>4</sup> Consequently, he redefined the functions of the family as: biological survival, responsibility for child rearing and child socialization processes, fulfillment of sexual needs, and sociability. He indicated that the former responsibility of the family for the functions of protection, the upholding of moral codes, the care of the sick and the aged, and the transmission of cultural values had in large measure been transferred to agencies outside the family unit.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>M. F. Nimkoff, The Family, pp. 47-97.

<sup>2</sup>Ernest Burgess and Harvey Locke, The Family: From Institution to Companionship, pp. 510-511.

<sup>3</sup>Nathan Ackerman, The Psychodynamics of Family Life: Diagnosis and Treatment of Family Relationships, p. 19, p. 339.

<sup>4</sup>William M. Kephart, The Family, Society, and the Individual, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 4-5.

Pollak, in 1967, suggested that movement toward a bureaucratic way of life had created new functions for the family:

(1) orchestration with such institutions as health care services, school systems, social security systems; (2) management of available time around self-determined priorities; (3) sexual synchronization over an extended life span; (4) economic coordination of the earning power of two adult earners; (5) outlet for and rescue from hostilities created and supported in bureaucratic existence; and (6) therapeutic cooperation with the health care services.<sup>1</sup>

Pollak speculated that, with governmental services in health, education, and welfare so frequently limited to only one member of a family, it may become a function of the modern family to integrate these services and develop expertise in their use. Pollak viewed this family function as being unprecedented and representative of a changing society.<sup>2</sup>

New functions of the family seem to focus on the husband-wife relationship. Wives today may expect to experience more than a decade of living alone with their husbands after the last child has left home. Under these circumstances the marital relationship increases in importance.

As a result of a study in Detroit, Blood outlined three new functions of the family: the affectional function which meets the need for acceptance and appreciation; the mental hygiene function which meets the need for release from emotional tension; and the companionship function

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<sup>1</sup>Otto Pollak, "The Outlook for the American Family," Journal of Marriage and the Family, 29:193, February, 1967.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 195.

which offsets the anonymity and loneliness of urban life.<sup>1</sup>

Pollak wrote that "the family of the future should be visualized as a place of intimacy in a world of loose and depersonalized relationships." The willingness to enter into one another's fears and act as a buffer for the freedom of expression in a world of constraints will probably develop as one of the family's most important functions.<sup>2</sup>

#### CHANGES IN THE AMERICAN FAMILY

Much of what has been described as change in American family structure and function is necessary adaptation to a culture now predominantly urban and technological rather than rural and agricultural. In describing changes in the American family four areas have been considered: family mobility, sizes of families, satisfaction in family living, and families in stress.

##### Family Mobility

Since World War II there has been an increase in the mobility of families. Sussman and Burchinal explained that the demands associated with occupational and geographical mobility have brought about a family pattern in urban areas consisting of relatively isolated nuclear family

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<sup>1</sup>Robert O. Blood, Jr., "Impact of Urbanization on American Family Structure and Functioning," Sociology and Social Research, 49:5-16, October, 1964.

<sup>2</sup>Pollak, op. cit., p. 199.



units which operate without much support from the kinship system.<sup>1</sup> Moore felt that these families must rely on their own resources and those of their community for adequate functioning.<sup>2</sup>

Some families experience difficulty in adjusting to a mobile society in that they resent a highly complex, impersonal, metropolitan area; they feel alone, abandoned and hopeless; and, as people surrounding them seem disinterested, they have a feeling of being lost.<sup>3</sup>

The proportion of families that move within a given year is relatively high among those with a young head and declines as the age of the head advances.<sup>4</sup>

#### Size of Families

There is evidence of a definite family-size relationship running through generations. Children who come from large families tend to have large families. This is more evident if the mother comes from a large family than if the father does. However, the greatest influence in size of family is education. Those with the least education have the largest families; those with the most education, the smallest families. High

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<sup>1</sup>Marvin B. Sussman and Lee Burchinal, "Kin Family Network: Unheralded Structure in Current Conceptualizations of Family Functioning," Marriage and Family Living, 24:231-248, August, 1962.

<sup>2</sup>Bernice Milburn Moore, "Families of America--Variations on a Theme," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 48:3, December, 1964.

<sup>3</sup>Wallace Denton, What's Happening to Our Families? p. 16.

<sup>4</sup>Paul C. Glick, American Families, p. 88.

school and college graduates tend to have small families.<sup>1</sup>

Landis explained that the decline in the size of the American family has been due to improved means of birth control, economic changes produced by the transition from a rural to an urban culture, and changes in attitudes and values.<sup>2</sup>

Blood took the position that the number of children in a family has dwindled as economic production has vanished from the home. Children have been transformed from useful "hands" into dregs on the family labor market. The decreased number of children born has been partially offset by the increased proportion who survive to maturity. Today childhood fatalities are so rare that childbearing can be reduced accordingly.<sup>3</sup>

Where the wife once was preoccupied with subsistence tasks, today she can focus on her children's personality problems and achievements. The emphasis has shifted from "child bearing to child-rearing, from the quantity of children produced to the quality of children raised."<sup>4</sup>

Blood further indicated the "homogenization of parental aspirations for children and the filtering down of family planning practices to the working class" as reasons that families at all levels of society are beginning to limit the size of the family to their "ability to pay,"

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<sup>1</sup>Paul H. Landis, Making the Most of Marriage, p. 612.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 611.

<sup>3</sup>Robert O. Blood Jr., "Impact of Urbanization on American Family Structure and Functioning," Sociology and Social Research, 49:10, October, 1964.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 11.



and for the first time in American history those with greater resources will have more children.<sup>1</sup>

#### Satisfaction in Family Living

According to Klemer there are many family members who are not realizing satisfaction in family living because of unreal expectations. It is the child who suffers most from the problem of too little expectation. Klemer viewed the child of the middle-class family as trained to gain satisfaction by receiving, and as untrained, unprepared, and often unable to make the transition to getting satisfaction through giving. Such transition is, however, essential if there is to be a successful marriage and satisfaction in family life. Inability to make this transition is the basis of a third of the problems brought to marriage counselors.<sup>2</sup>

Despert suggested that by freeing a girl from the real work of the family she is deprived of the necessary emotional foundation for doing the work of her own family when she is a woman. The girl who has never experienced satisfaction in creating comfort and happiness for those she loves does not suddenly learn this on the day of her marriage.<sup>3</sup>

Pollak added further support to this idea when he pointed out that psychiatrists have become concerned with the appearance of "character

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Richard H. Klemer, "The Empathetic Approach to Teaching Family Relations," Journal of Home Economics, 57:619-625, October, 1965.

<sup>3</sup> Louise J. Despert, Children of Divorce, p. 106.

disorders" in their patients and clients. "Character disorder" in this instance means such a strong preoccupation with "getting" from other people that the possibility of giving is completely excluded.<sup>1</sup>

"Appreciation for masculine and feminine role differences characteristically found in our culture is extremely important for both husband and wife as marriage partners and parents," was stressed by Lynn.<sup>2</sup> He recognized parents as especially significant sex role models and stated "the child is often highly motivated to model himself after the parent of the same sex."<sup>3</sup>

As youth participates in academic and extra-curricular school activities there is a withdrawal from family-centered and family-attended activities and high exposure to peer influence. This does not necessarily mean rejection of parental norms.

In four separate studies high school pupils were found to have more favorable than unfavorable attitudes toward their parents;<sup>4</sup> to ascribe more favorable traits to adults than did their parents;<sup>5</sup> to

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<sup>1</sup> Otto Pollack, "Some Challenges to the American Family," Children, 11:19-20, January-February, 1964.

<sup>2</sup> David B. Lynn, "Learning Masculine and Feminine Roles," Marriage and Family Living, 25:103-105, February, 1963.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Dale B. Harris and Sing Chu Tseng, "Children's Attitudes Toward Peers and Parents as Revealed by Sentence Completions," Child Development, 28:401-411, December, 1957.

<sup>5</sup> Robert D. Hess and Irene Goldblatt, "The Status of Adolescents in American Society: a Problem in Social Identity," Child Development, 28:459-468, December, 1957.

desire parental approval more than that of their friends;<sup>1</sup> and to consider parents the most important reference point in their lives.<sup>2</sup> It was further found that if parents were active in organizations, their children also were active; when parents were nonparticipants, their children usually showed the same pattern.<sup>3</sup>

Hobbs considered this society, particularly the urban sector, not as "family-minded" as formerly. He stated that the tendency was to regard oneself primarily as an individual and only secondarily as a family member. With family life no longer the center-of-existence, individual members are much more likely to have outside interests.<sup>4</sup>

The American middle-class child, according to Pollak, has many interests outside the home and is notoriously over scheduled. As a result this child has little time to be with his parents and to acquire intergenerational competence.<sup>5</sup>

The structure of a family consists of the interrelatedness of positions and roles which the family members occupy. One study of families in Detroit analyzed the power structure and division of labor. It was found that the general mode of decision making was equalitarian;

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<sup>1</sup>James S. Coleman, The Adolescent Society, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup>Robert C. Bealer, Fern K. Willits, and Peter R. Maida, "The Rebellious Youth Subculture," Children, 11:43-48, March-April, 1964.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>A. H. Hobbs, The Claims of Sociology, p. 21.

<sup>5</sup>Otto Pollak, "The Outlook for the American Family," Journal of Marriage and the Family, 29:194, February, 1967.

that the parent with greater ability to make a decision usually did so; and that the parent who had the most education, belonged to more organizations and attended church more often made more of the family decisions.<sup>1</sup>

In numerous analyses from the Texas Cooperative Youth Study education of parents was presented as a major conditioning factor in making available to youth resources and opportunities for adequate participation in family living and cultural development. Education of parents is a determining factor in the development of youth toward maximum competence in school, in interpersonal relations within the family, and in the conceptions of their own personal adequacy.<sup>2</sup>

#### Families in Stress

The 1961 Current Population Reports indicated that 87 per cent of American families have a married couple as head of the household, with the remaining families having a widowed, divorced or single person as head of the household.<sup>3</sup>

Each year more than a million American homes are broken by

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<sup>1</sup> Robert O. Blood Jr., "Impact of Urbanization on American Family Structure and Functioning," Sociology and Social Research, 49:8, October, 1964.

<sup>2</sup> Bernice Milburn Moore and Wayne H. Holtzman, Tomorrow's Parents, p. 275.

<sup>3</sup> United States Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Population Characteristics, Series P-20, No. 106, January 9, 1961, p. 20.

divorce, separation, death or desertion.<sup>1</sup> As the divorce rate has increased there has been a changed attitude about divorce. The child of divorced parents has the trauma of the changed family situation but feels less criticism from society. Perhaps the greatest change in the attitude about divorce is that an increasing number of ministers sanction divorce in the case of extreme incompatibility and unhappiness.<sup>2</sup>

Despert declared, "Not legal divorce but emotional divorce is the destroyer of children!"<sup>3</sup> Remoteness between parents is sensed by children and is usually accompanied by a parallel remoteness between parents and their children. However, the child who has been able to weather a divorce has a better chance for healthy maturity than a child of an unhappy marriage.<sup>4</sup>

A broken home is more damaging to adolescents than to young or grown children. A home broken by death is less damaging to the home climate than one broken by divorce or separation. The single-parent home is less damaging to children emotionally than the reconstructed home. However, the most critical situation is an unhappy home broken by divorce and then reconstructed, where the child has four rather than two

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<sup>1</sup>Maxwell S. Stewart, Problems of Family Life and How to Meet Them, p. 144.

<sup>2</sup>Wallace Denton, What's Happening to Our Families?, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup>J. Louise Despert, Children of Divorce, p. 120.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

parents.<sup>1</sup>

The natural family presents hazards enough, but compare it with the stepparent family as Simon viewed it:

Subtract a parent and the struggle is harder. Add a new stepparent, and the intensity is again increased, with mother or father's support at stake. Multiply by the remarriage factor which brings a set of ready-made children into the family sanctum and disturbances go right off the slide rule. Problems cannot be solved by natural family formulas when his and her children's emotions meet those of a wife-mother-stepmother and husband-father-stepfather.<sup>2</sup>

Nearly eleven per cent of the nation's children live in the step-child state. Death and desertion increase the number of incomplete families so that eight million children are living with only one parent.<sup>3</sup>

In a study by Burchinal it was found that some children suffer extreme trauma because of divorce or separation and consequent withdrawal of one parent, or the addition of a stepparent; and for some development was affected seriously. However, he suggested that reconstitution of a family was not the overwhelming influential factor in the children's lives that many have thought it to be. He further suggested that, instead of focusing on the possible negative influences of divorce upon the development of children, education specialists could do well by studying the processes whereby parents have minimized possible trauma for their children at the time of divorce and have best helped the

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth B. Hurlock, Adolescent Development, p. 606.

<sup>2</sup>Anne W. Simon, Stepchild in the Family, pp. 201-202.

<sup>3</sup>David M. Fulcomer, "What Are Today's Families Like?," Journal of Home Economics, 55:695, November, 1963.



children adapt to new family situations.<sup>1</sup>

#### TEACHING OF FAMILY RELATIONS IN HOME ECONOMICS

Essentially what a person does, regardless of time in his life, is guided and affected by relationships within the family. Although the family is the most important influence in the development of youth, the school and other agencies have a responsibility and a role to assume. The responsibility and need for teaching family relations is increasing rather than decreasing.

As Kephart indicated, the institutional significance of the family has come to be so much taken for granted that in spite of its importance it has been generally neglected as an area of study.<sup>2</sup> Hill expressed the same view by pointing out, "Our society has taken the family for granted, ignored it, shunted it aside, and expected it to do the nation's patching and mending without reward or attention."<sup>3</sup>

In reporting the Texas study, Moore and Holtzman, repeatedly pointed out that today's youth must be educated if they are to be the most effective parents of tomorrow. They emphasized that

the need for education in the schools for family life stands shoulder to shoulder with the demands for education for scientific advance, technological competence, and dependable citizenship.

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<sup>1</sup>Lee G. Burchinal, "Characteristics of Adolescents from Unbroken, Broken and Reconstituted Families," Marriage and Family Living, 26: 44-51, February, 1964.

<sup>2</sup>William M. Kephart, The Family, Society, and the Individual, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Willard Waller and Reubin Hill, The Family, p. 3.

Without healthy personalities, capable of creating and adapting to change, neither scientists nor technologists can produce what is needed to enhance man himself.<sup>1</sup>

Family living today requires more democratic contact between family members; and individuals must learn new family roles, new patterns of interaction.<sup>2</sup> Young people also must be helped to prepare for adulthood and for parenthood. As Coon concisely put it, "few learn to be wise parents and constructive family members as an incidental outcome of living."<sup>3</sup>

LeMasters supports the need for this realistic type of education. In a study to examine parenthood as a crisis, LeMasters found that young people in this society are the victims of "discontinuity" in cultural conditioning and that they often have to "unlearn" previous training before they can move on to the next set of roles. From his study it was disclosed that practically nothing in or out of school got young people ready to be fathers and mothers; husbands and wives, yes, but not parents. Some of the young mothers were "bitter" about their high school and college training.<sup>4</sup>

As pointed out by Dager and others, there is a need for more

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<sup>1</sup> Bernice Milburn Moore and Wayne H. Holtzman, Tomorrow's Parents, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Helen E. Buchanan, "Teaching Family Relationships," Journal of Home Economics, 56:305. May, 1964.

<sup>3</sup> Beulah I. Coon, Home Economics in the Secondary Schools, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> E. E. LeMasters, "Parenthood as Crisis," Crisis Intervention: Selected Readings, pp. 111-117.



study focusing on family relations and family life education in the schools. From a survey made in Indiana, they discovered that family life courses were taken by only 12 per cent of the total enrollment of schools in the sample.<sup>1</sup>

Home economics teachers can contribute to helping students meet the responsibilities that face them as family members. However, teachers must stress the family relations approach; must emphasize family interaction more than they have in the past to make learning more meaningful for the lives of individuals and family members.<sup>2</sup>

As indicated by the Texas study, the attitudes, problems, concerns, and interests of youth can be understood only in relation to the families and homes from which they have come. The home economics teacher should be concerned with the kinds of family members her students are now and will be, with their growth and development toward independence, greater maturity, and with all phases of family living.

Buchanan outlined the objectives of teaching family relations in home economics classes:

1. Promote increased understanding of self and others
2. Provide the student with knowledge of patterns of family living in our society
3. Promote social and emotional growth on the part of individual students

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<sup>1</sup>Edward Z. Dager, Glenn A. Harper and Robert N. Whitehurst, "Family Life Education in Public High Schools: A Survey Report on Indiana," Marriage and Family Living, 24:365-370, November, 1962.

<sup>2</sup>Buchanan, loc. cit.

4. Help students to recognize and accept individual and family differences
5. Help the individual student become aware of his own values and to clarify them
6. Help the student develop skill in communication in emotionally loaded areas related to individuals and families.<sup>1</sup>

The competent home economics teacher is concerned with helping students learn to think, to transfer knowledge, to recognize values, and to apply knowledge and values in coping with everyday problems.

It is important to use the physical flexibility of the homemaking department to facilitate family centered teaching in an effort to help girls recognize the interrelatedness of all homemaking study to the aspects of family living. The program must be flexible so that planning may be done to include the identified needs of the students.<sup>2</sup>

New approaches may be needed in the teaching of family relations. Zimmerman and Cervantes emphasized using the approach of studying about "successful" families rather than the usual approach of studying "problem" families. They suggested that the basic question should be "How do successful families get that way and stay that way?"<sup>3</sup> Using the framework of family strengths to help students acquire a better understanding of family relations, family living, and family interaction was stressed

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Jerline Kennedy, "Programs for Students with Special Needs," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 48:38-44, December, 1964.

<sup>3</sup> Carle C. Zimmerman and Lucius F. Cervantes, Successful American Families, p. 3.

by Otto.<sup>1</sup>

Major tasks for the family life educator and the home economics teacher are: meeting the problem of school-age marriages so as to maximize individual satisfaction and reduce a feeling of futility in marriage, helping students assess early marriage in regard to their motivations and degree of maturity, and promoting an understanding of responsibilities that marriage entails.<sup>2</sup>

A democratic society can afford nothing less for the survival of its way of life than well-educated parents, establishing and maintaining satisfying family living at home and for their children.

#### SUMMARY

The family is basic to all types of social organization; it is the institution which concerns itself with the various statuses and roles involved in kinship organization. Families are changing in functions, in structure, mobility, and size. Much of what has been described as change in the family structure and functions is necessary adaptation within the family to a changing complex society.

Families are concentrating more on the quality of children raised rather than the quantity of children raised. There is a growing concern that children of the middle class families have had so much done for

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert A. Otto, "What Is a Strong Family?," Marriage and Family Living, 24:77-80, February, 1962.

<sup>2</sup>Rachel M. Inselberg, "Marital Problems and Satisfaction in High School Marriages," Marriage and Family Living, 24:74-77, February, 1962.

them that experiencing satisfaction in giving of themselves has been excluded.

Withdrawal of youth from family-centered activities does not necessarily mean a rejection of parental norms. Parental approval is more important to youth than approval of the peer group and parents remain the most important reference point.

Changed societal attitudes regarding divorce have reduced the trauma of divorce for children and reconstruction of a broken family is not as influential in a child's life as was once thought.

The home economics teacher has an increasingly important role in the education of youth for assuming the responsibilities of family life. To be effective, the teaching of family relations must be meaningful, must be realistic, and must deal with significant problems of families.

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

One purpose of this study was to make a family background and interest survey of the ninth grade girls enrolled in homemaking classes at Truesdell Junior High School. Results and summary of the survey are included in this chapter.

The questionnaire (Appendix) was distributed to the six ninth grade homemaking classes during the regularly scheduled period. The questionnaire was completed by 135 girls.

#### FAMILY BACKGROUND

Items one through thirty-one from the questionnaire have been analyzed for discussion under family background.

##### Family Types

Responses to the questionnaire revealed that ninety-four (70 per cent) of the girls were from intact families, forty-one (30 per cent) were from families broken by divorce (twenty-eight), death (three mothers, eight fathers), or separation of parents (two). Of the forty-one girls from broken families, fifteen lived with mother only, thirteen lived with mother and stepfather, six lived with father and stepmother, three lived with father only, three lived with aunt and uncle, and one lived with a guardian.

Including the 135 girls in the study children in a family ranged from one to twelve children in one family. The intact families contained

a total of 341 children, an average of 3.5 children per family, with 302 (89 per cent) still living at home. A total of 186 children were members of broken homes, an average of 4.5 children per family, with 130 (70 per cent) still living at home. Among the children in broken homes were eight halvesisters, seven halfbrothers, seven stepsisters, and three stepbrothers.

Only two households included members other than the nuclear family: one included a grandmother and one included a friend.

#### Type of Housing

Responses to the questionnaire indicated 128 of the girls (95 per cent) lived in single family dwellings, four lived in mobile homes, and three lived in duplexes.

The size of dwelling, including bathroom(s), ranged from three and a half rooms to fourteen rooms. Houses containing six rooms (16 per cent), seven rooms and eight rooms (24 per cent, respectively), were indicated by the greatest number of girls.

#### Educational Background of Parents and Educational Expectations of Girls

In responding to question seven from the questionnaire, "What schooling did each of your parents have?," the girls were asked to refer to the household in which they lived at that time. If a parent had died and there was no stepparent or other person who was filling this role, the girls were asked to indicate the educational level attained by the natural parent. The girls who lived with an aunt and uncle or a guardian were asked to indicate the educational background of these persons



rather than that of the natural parents. Those girls who did not know the educational background of these adults were asked to write in "don't know." The girls were asked to mark business college, nurse's training, beauty school, and special schools of any kind in addition to other types of education.

Table I shows the educational background of the 270 parents or adults with whom the girl lived and/or the deceased parent whose role had not been filled. The educational background of eleven of the parents was unknown. Of those adults whose educational background was known, a total of eleven (4 per cent) had less than an eighth grade education, twenty-seven (10 per cent) had completed grade eight only, and 121 (45 per cent) had completed high school. Including business college, nurse's training and special schools a total of sixty-nine (26 per cent) of the parents had training in addition to a high school education. Of those, six had graduated from junior college and fifteen from a four-year college.

The educational expectation of the girls in the study was greater than that achieved by their parents. These girls, having completed the ninth grade, had already exceeded the formal education of the 14 per cent of their parents who had completed grade eight or less. No responses by the girls indicated that less than a high school education was planned; twenty-one per cent of the girls planned to attend or complete a four-year college; and sixty-five per cent of the girls planned some educational training in addition to high school.

TABLE I  
 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF PARENTS OF  
 135 NINTH GRADE GIRLS

Amount of Education	Father*		Mother*	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Don't know	8	5.9	3	2.2
Less than grade eight	7	5.2	4	2.9
Completed grade eight	17	12.6	10	7.5
Attended but did not complete high school	24	17.8	31	23.0
High school graduate	55	40.8	66	48.9
Junior college graduate	3	2.2	3	2.2
Attended but did not complete 4-year college	12	8.8	12	8.8
4-year college graduate	9	6.7	6	4.5
Business college	3	2.2	6	4.5
Nurse's training			6	4.5
Beauty school			3	2.2
Special school	4	2.9	2	1.4

\* The parent or the adult with whom the girl lived and/or the deceased parent whose role had not been filled.

NOTE: Totals exceed 135 and 100 per cent because special schooling was indicated in addition to other types of educational training.



Educational expectations of the 135 girls were:

<u>Educational level</u>	<u>Responses</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
High school	47	34.9
Junior college	6	4.4
4-year college	28	20.7
Business college	20	14.9
Nurse's training	12	8.9
Beauty school	18	13.3
Other (stewardess, dental assistant, seminary)	4	2.9
Total	135	100.0

#### Employment of Parents

Father's employment was reported mainly as manual and semi-skilled labor (36 per cent), skilled labor (20 per cent), or public and protective service (10 per cent). Twenty fathers (15 per cent) were reported as being in managerial or supervisory positions; nine fathers in a professional occupation; and seven fathers as owners of small businesses. Three fathers were reported as working two full-time jobs and four fathers were reported as unemployed. Five girls did not know the employment of their father.

Of the fathers who were employed, slightly less than one-third worked regular day-time hours, approximately one-third worked hours which varied from one shift to another; and the remainder worked evening and night hours.

Fifty-one per cent of the mothers were full-time homemakers. Those mothers who were employed outside the home generally worked during the day at semi-skilled and skilled jobs. Ten mothers had professional types of employment.

### Socialization of Family Members

With Truesdell having a "closed noon hour" it would be impossible for these girls to have lunch at home on a school day. However, 80 per cent of the girls indicated that the evening meal was eaten as a family, while 9 per cent indicated that no meals were eaten as a family on a school day. On a week end or during the summer 31 per cent of the girls indicated that lunch was eaten as a family and 85 per cent of the girls indicated that the evening meal was eaten as a family. Approximately one-fourth of the families "seldom" or "never" ate away from home as a family compared with one-third who ate out as often as once a week.

Family dinners and gatherings with relatives centered around special holidays (82 per cent) and special family days (33 per cent); only 12 per cent indicated the family "seldom" or "never" had family gatherings. Analysis of responses indicated that those families which gathered for special holidays also gathered for birthdays and other special family days.

Families of the girls were somewhat removed from relatives close enough for a visit without staying all night: 68 per cent reported no relatives on the father's side and 40 per cent reported no relatives on the mother's side living near. Twenty-eight per cent of the girls saw their grandparents daily or once a week; 32 per cent saw grandparents on vacations only; only 3 per cent of the girls had no grandparents living.

Friends of the girls were invited to the home more often than friends of the parents. Fifty-four per cent of the girls, as compared with 42 per cent of the parents invited friends to their house "daily,"

"anytime," or as often as "once a week." Six of the girls were not free to have friends stop by without invitation, while twenty-two of the parents did not expect their friends to stop by without invitation.

#### Mobility of Families

The range of time the families had lived in the area was from five months to fifteen years. Fifty-five of the families (41 per cent) had lived in the area five years or less, forty families (30 per cent) six to ten years, and thirty-six families (27 per cent) eleven to fifteen years. The greatest number had lived in the area three years.

In responding to the question, "How often have you moved since you started to school in first grade?" it was found that slightly over half (51 per cent) had moved from one to four times. Thirty-eight (21 per cent) of the girls had not moved since they started to the first grade. Seven girls had moved ten or more times, with the most extreme answer being "so many times I have lost track—about thirty-five."

In rank order the number of grade schools attended by the 135 girls were:

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Grade schools attended</u>	<u>Responses</u>
1	2	44
2	1	36
3	3	20
4	4	15
5	5	9
6	6	6
7	7	1
8	8	1
9	9	1
10	15	1
11	30 or more	1

This may be an indication that at least part of these girls were affected by changes in school boundary lines.

The greatest number of girls (eighty-seven or 64 per cent) had attended one junior high school, thirty-nine (29 per cent) had attended two, and nine had attended three or more junior high schools.

#### Activities of Family Members

Although 70 per cent of the girls indicated they attended church, only 47 per cent indicated the family was able to attend as a unit. Over 19 per cent of those girls attending church were not members of the church. Fourteen families were reported as having been members of their church for more than fifteen years; eleven families had been members for less than a year.

Watching T V, bowling, skating, and reading were reported as the way leisure time was most often spent during the winter; being replaced by swimming, drive-in movies, camping, and picnics during the summer. Sixty-two per cent of the families spent leisure time together.

Of the 40 per cent of the girls who participated in an organized recreation program, bowling was the most common response. Just over one-third (36 per cent) indicated taking special lessons of some sort, with music lessons the most common response. One family was reported as taking Judo lessons together.

#### Sources of Conflict in the Household

To the question, "Which of these create (or have created) problems in your home now?" the girls were asked to respond to as many of

the forty-three items on the check list as were applicable to their home and to write in additional responses if they wished to do so.

Only one item, "who does the work," was marked as creating a problem in over half of the households. Those items marked as creating problems in over one-third of the households, in order of importance, were:

<u>Problem Area</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Use of the telephone	66
Grades	65
Money management	58
Teasing	56
Dress styles	48
Doing homework	47
Discipline	46
Allowance	45

It is interesting to note that only one item, money management, could have other than almost a direct personal basis.

#### EXPECTATIONS FOR FUTURE

Findings are reported in terms of plans for marriage, reaction to marriage of parents, and atmosphere for future home.

#### Expectations for Marriage

Four girls indicated they expected to be married within the next year; five during high school; seventy-two after high school; sixteen during college; thirty after college; and eight never.

Over two-thirds of the girls expected to work after marriage while the rest expected to be full-time homemakers. A very small number

of the girls indicated they would work if it was necessary; however, they expected their husband to be able to provide for them. Some girls expected to work only until they had a family and then planned to be able to be a full-time mother.

To the question, "Would you like your marriage to be like that of your parents?" 36 per cent answered "yes." Some of the supporting comments given were:

My parents are cheerful and try to help solve our problems.

They respect our discussions and ideas without getting mad because they feel we are wrong. They are really loads of fun.

We have fun together.

They have a successful marriage; lots of happiness.

They love each other and are happy together.

They get along real good. I have never heard them yell at each other. I think we are a happy family.

My parents don't fight. They get along real well. I hope my marriage is like theirs.

They manage money well.

They are very happily married, I can tell this just by watching them. I'm not saying they never have arguments, but when they do they are not heated ones. I just hope I am as devoted to my partner as they are to one another.

They have had a good life so far.

They are happy and gay; understand each other and make the best of everything that happens. There isn't anything they can't manage.

Sixty-three per cent of the girls did not want their marriage to be like that of their parents. Comments to support this answer included:



NEVER NEVER NEVER!!!

Too many fights--if that is what marriage is--I don't want it!

You wouldn't believe the way they fight!

My dad gets tired of mom griping all the time. I wouldn't gripe all the time.

They can never agree on an answer to something.

All my parents do is yell their blasted heads off at us kids. Some kids have it okay, but we don't. We do all the work around the house and yet my dad says that we are lazy, and don't appreciate anything. We appreciate anything we get--which isn't much--they are the ones that don't appreciate anything we do for them--which is all we can.

They were married too young.

I can't talk to my parents at all! My older brother tries to help me, but it doesn't work too good.

They never talk out a problem so sometimes feelings are hurt.

My mom and stepdad and family are all strangers.

I would like dad to go places with us, but he is never home.

Dad works a different shift from my mom--we never see them together, they hardly see each other.

Dad is always gone--too many fights when he is there.

They are separated now and it causes unhappiness in our home.

They are separated. They argue when they are together but it is hard on the baby not to have a father.

Mother has married four times--who wants that!

Mother has been married and divorced four times and still hasn't found the right one. I hope I never have to get divorced!

This is because they are divorced and I don't want my husband to do to my kids like my dad did me!

They got divorced, I want to stay married!

They got divorced. They are old fashioned. I want to be with the "in crowd." I want to do things, not sit around home. I don't even want to get married after the fights I have listened to.

Dad divorced mom and then wanted to come back after he had married and divorced another woman. They had two children. It isn't fair to ask us to like them. They're a mess.

I don't want to put other children through what I have been through!

I don't wish to get a divorce and remarry, but I would like my marriage to be as happy as my mom's is now.

My father committed suicide—mother is mentally ill. I live with an aunt and uncle. I don't want my marriage to be like theirs either! All they do is fight!

There is too much sickness in our family.

Father died when we were all little. Mom raised four kids to this day by herself, working as a beautician. I hope I don't have to do that!

Marriage is too much work. They need more activities—we don't even have family get-togethers! If that is what marriage is— who needs it!

Forget it—it is hopeless!!!

#### Atmosphere for Future Home

In responding to "Would you like the general atmosphere or 'pattern of living' of your home to be like that found in your parent's home?" fifty-seven (42 per cent) of the girls answered yes; seventy-eight (58 per cent) answered no. "Yes" comments included:

Everybody works together.

My parents have made a good home.

Comparatively organized.

Because my mother is so understanding.



There is a religious atmosphere in our home, that is important.

We go to church and we all laugh and have fun together.

They let us do what we want, but they have disciplinary actions, too.

It's a happy home; everybody tries to understand everybody else.

Everyone leaves everyone's business to them.

Everyone seems welcome at our home—I like that! Mom has a great sense of humor—I like that! I like my folks!

Selected comments from the questionnaire which supported the "no" answers to this question were:

We have to be quiet because mom sleeps days!

It's too mixed up with different shifts.

I want to do things and go places with my children.

We never do anything together—as a matter of fact mom and dad never do anything but work and gripe—they never have any fun.

Everybody talks all the time—it gets on your nerves.

We should all do equal amounts of work. I'd let my kids date earlier than my mom and dad let us.

My mother is a very particular person—she cleans house all the time.

I don't like to see kids get beat all the time, it makes me nervous.

There is so much yelling and fighting it is sickening.

We never get along.

I'd like to stay home when I have kids, but my mother has to work.

We are always off schedule.

This remarriage is almost three years old, but I still resent things. We are improving and I'm sure we can be better. There is love in our home.

I'd rather be a family and more or less work together rather than everyone going to different churches and doing different things constantly.

Everyone hates each other at our house, except my mom and I.

#### CONCERNS FOR STUDY IN FAMILY RELATIONS

The last two items on the questionnaire were a check list with twenty-three items concerning various problems relating to family relations and space for writing in additional topics for study. The girls were instructed to respond to each item as being "very important," "important," of "little importance," or "no importance" for study in a family relations unit. Only one item, "understanding parents," received no rating below that of "little importance." (See Table II.)

Tabulation of the items marked "very important" on the questionnaire indicated that five items were of greatest concern to half of the girls for study in a family relations unit. In rank order they were: understanding of parents, being recognized as an individual, success of teen age marriages, effect of teen age marriages on families relations, and money management for family. However, combining the "very important" and "important" responses indicated seven items to be of greatest concern to three-fourths of the girls in the study. In rank order they were: understanding parents, being recognized as an individual, needs of individual family members, money management for family, success of teen age marriages, effect of teen age marriages on families relations, and understanding brothers and sisters.

Of least concern to the girls in the study were the following

TABLE II  
 CONCERNS OF 135 NINTH GRADE GIRLS FOR  
 STUDY IN FAMILY RELATIONS

Item of concern	Rating			
	Very Important	Important	Little Importance	No Importance
Needs of individual family members	37	68	25	5
What families provide for individual members	36	62	33	4
Being recognized as an individual	87	30	14	4
Understanding parents	92	35	8	0
Understanding brothers and sisters	55	48	22	10
Understanding grandparents	25	49	42	19
How families develop a "pattern of living"	35	43	34	23
Family customs other than your own	13	38	46	38
How family customs change	22	42	46	25
Effect of divorce on a family	65	36	18	16
Management of living space	40	52	31	12
Money management for family	75	39	12	9
Money management for self	49	50	23	13
Changing roles of women in the family	27	52	33	23
Changing roles of men in the family	23	48	42	22

TABLE II (continued)

Item of concern	Rating			
	Very Important	Important	Little Importance	No Importance
Use of leisure time by family	32	45	35	23
Making family mealtime more interesting	40	45	31	19
Entertaining friends at home	54	46	24	11
Effect of T V, radio, magazines on family relations	44	44	36	11
Success of teen age marriages	83	21	12	19
Effect of teen age marriages on families relations	78	26	16	15
Effect of working mothers on families relations	50	45	22	18
Effect of moving on family members	35	40	25	35

items: how families develop a pattern of living, use of leisure time, changing roles of women, effect of moving, understanding grandparents, changing roles of men, how family customs change, and customs other than their own.


## CHAPTER IV

### FAMILY RELATIONS UNIT

The second purpose of this study was to plan a unit for teaching family relations based on pupil needs.

From the questionnaire seven areas of concern were identified by the subjects to be of greatest importance for study in family relations. In rank order, the areas of concern were: understanding parents, being recognized as an individual, needs of individual family members, money management for family, success of teen age marriages, effect of teen age marriages on families relations, and understanding brothers and sisters.

The unit that follows is divided into six areas of concern because the two items relating to marriage were combined. The major focus of this unit is upon relationships within the family and how privileges are related to responsibilities. Each area of concern contains objectives stated in terms of pupil behavioral change, generalizations, and learning experiences.



## AREA OF CONCERN: UNDERSTANDING PARENTS

## PUPIL BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES:

Recognizes the basic functions of the family

Identifies responsibilities of parents

Develops an awareness of parents as people

GENERALIZATIONSLEARNING EXPERIENCES

Families function as a basic unit in society for the care of individual members, regulation of behavior, and economic support.

Parental reactions toward their children are influenced by the responsibility to provide for and protect their children, and the desire for their children to avoid mistakes.

One need of parents is to feel they have worth and that they are loved and respected.

Discuss functions of family. Pupils identify parents responsibilities in relation to family functions; their own role in relation to family functions.

Use minute dramas to present parent-pupil conflicts. Pupils identify conflict with parents' sense of responsibility and/or desire for children to avoid mistakes.

By home survey and observation pupil identifies what father and mother have done for the family in past two days. Pupils discuss how hours were spent other than employment: household routine, home repairs and maintenance, services to children.

Pupils identify ways in which each parent has given encouragement and support to family members or persons outside the home. Pupils make a list (to be shown on overhead projector) of what they have done for parents during the past week.

GENERALIZATIONSLEARNING EXPERIENCES

Parents are individuals with needs, desires, aspirations, and disappointments of their own.

Pupils plan, carry out and report on one activity (which is to be carried through one week) for the "Pursue Parents' Pleasure" Campaign.

Discuss needs of parents. Pupils identify those needs which are similar to their own: to be loved, respected, understood; have outside activities, recognition of accomplishments, encouragement, privacy, rest.

Discuss desires of parents. Pupils identify those which are similar to their own: to be liked by others, to succeed in employment, to be respected, for success of children.

Discuss aspirations of parents. Pupils identify what parents wanted to do, what they have accomplished, what their disappointments might have been. Pupils identify the long term plans of parents and their role in the development of parents' plans.

Development of empathy aids in understanding parental feelings and attitudes.

Pupils present characterization "What kind of a parent would I be?" Pupils analyze presentation in relation to parent viewpoint and needs; their own viewpoint and needs. Pupils draw conclusions regarding special privileges and responsibilities of parents; of children in family. Pupils discuss "Do parents have the right to make mistakes?"

Pupils determine relationship of parents' emotional reactions within the family as they are affected by external influences.



GENERALIZATIONSLEARNING EXPERIENCES

Check results of "Pursue Parents' Pleasure" Campaign.

## SUGGESTED VISUALS

"Parents Are People, Too"

Guidance Series, McGraw-Hill Book Company,  
Text-Film Division, 330 West 42nd Street,  
New York, New York 10036

"How to Get Along With  
Parents"

Marriage and Family Living Series, Society  
for Visual Education, Inc., 1345 Diversey  
Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614

## AREA OF CONCERN: NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL FAMILY MEMBERS

## PUPIL BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES:

Recognizes that in a democratic family the rights of each of the members is respected

Identifies the mutual needs and the expectations of individual family members

Is aware of effects of internal and external crises on needs of individual family members

GENERALIZATIONSLEARNING EXPERIENCE

Each person is unique with individual needs, traits, abilities, and ambitions.

When family members understand the needs of each individual, what each expects of the other, they learn new ways of adjusting to one another.

Emotions may be expressed in a variety of ways, some of which are socially acceptable and some are not.

A feeling of empathy toward family members is developed as one's knowledge of others increases.

Pupils read text and additional sources on needs and characteristics of various ages of family members.

Pupils describe how needs, privileges and responsibilities change with age.

Panel of pupils discuss how the family organization can be more flexible to meet the needs of individual members.

Panel of pupils on the role of the family in emotional growth of individual members and individual ways of displaying and controlling emotions.

Dramatize conflicts and crises relating to individual family members.

Analyze the affect of conflict or crises on the individual member and on other family members.

## SUGGESTED VISUALS

- "How Can I Understand Other People?" Guidance Series, Set 1, McGraw-Hill.
- "Is There a Typical Family?" Guidance Series, Set 4, McGraw-Hill.
- "Getting Along With Your Family" Guidance Series, Set 6, McGraw-Hill.

AREA OF CONCERN: BEING RECOGNIZED AS AN INDIVIDUAL

PUPIL BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES:

Recognizes and identifies personal needs

Relates individual needs to those of other family members

Recognizes a changing role within the family and peer group

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GENERALIZATIONS

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LEARNING EXPERIENCES

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Individuals seek relationships with others to satisfy the need(s) for recognition, affection, adequacy, self-expression and empathy.

Satisfaction of individual needs is influenced by family background.

Everyone needs and wants to be an accepted member of a social group.

SUGGESTED VISUALS

"You and Your Growth"

"Your Feelings"

"Your Family and You"

"So You Want to Be Independent"

Pupils identify and discuss needs for recognition, affection, adequacy, self-expression, and empathy.

Pupils consider how these needs have been and are being met by family members.

Pupil identifies own position and role in immediate family, with other relatives and with peer group.

Pupils view and discuss filmstrips relating to growth, emotions and being independent.

Pupils write a short paper explaining their role(s) in the family.

Guidance Discussion Series, Jam Handy Organization, 2821 East Grand Boulevard, Detroit, Michigan 48211

Guidance Series, Set 5, McGraw-Hill

## AREA OF CONCERN: UNDERSTANDING BROTHERS AND SISTERS

## PUPIL BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES:

Knows how growth and development of younger brothers and sisters affects behavior

Is aware of privileges and responsibilities of brothers and sisters

Recognizes uniqueness of individuals

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 GENERALIZATIONS

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 LEARNING EXPERIENCES
 

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Knowledge of ways children grow and develop leads to better understanding of their development and needs.

Interaction between brothers and sisters is influenced by the feelings each has for the other.

Younger children learn and grow through association with older children whom they admire and try to imitate.<sup>1</sup>

Each individual is unique in the way he contributes to and is affected by his family.

Pupils read text and other literature to identify characteristics and needs of younger children.

Class discussion of younger brother and sister relationships. Class identifies and interprets relationships with developmental characteristics of younger brother and sister.

Use "question box" to collect class discussion items of sources of conflict between brothers and sisters. Role play family situations involving interaction with brothers and sisters. From role playing pupils identify responsibilities and privileges of brothers and sisters. Pupils relate role playing to development and needs of brother and sister.

Pupils compare contribution to family of each sibling. Pupils list activities of siblings and relate to interests and abilities of individuals; relate to family pride and recognition and/or disapproval.


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<sup>1</sup>New York State, Home Economics Education Syllabus, p. 68.

## SUGGESTED VISUALS

"Getting Along With  
Brothers and Sisters"

Guidance Series, Set 2, McGraw-Hill



## AREA OF CONCERN: MONEY MANAGEMENT FOR FAMILY

## PUPIL BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES:

Recognizes areas of expenditures for family

Identifies factors influencing family spending

Becomes aware that wise use of money, possessions and talents can enlarge the resources of the family

GENERALIZATIONSLEARNING EXPERIENCES

Many factors combine to influence the nature of family spending.

Family monies are often adjusted to meet the needs of individual family members.

Factors influencing spending are determined by stage of family development, values and goals, attitudes toward spending, and community influences.

Pupils describe areas of common expenditure for families.

Pupils identify special expenditures of families; such as braces for teeth, glasses, medical bills, and recreational equipment and expenses.

Pupils make personal list of common expenditures applicable to their family situation. Estimate amount of family monies spent for these areas. Pupil check list with parent to see if their estimate falls within family expenditures. Class compares general accuracy of estimates.

By use of buzz groups pupils identify factors which influence personal and family spending practices. Pupil identifies stage of family, attitudes toward spending, community influences. Pupil considers what the values are in her family: people, material possessions, activities, or "do it yourself."



GENERALIZATIONSLEARNING EXPERIENCES

Advertising from mass media is an influencing factor on family and personal spending practices.

Money management is the process of setting up, following, evaluating and, when necessary, revising a plan for the use of income.

Family income may be extended through the resourcefulness of the family members.

## SUGGESTED VISUALS

"So Your Budget Won't Budge"

"Learning to Manage Your Money"

Pupils list items recently purchased because of television promotion.

Pupils determine how advertising creates desires for goods and services; how advertising affects family budgets and spending. Pupils examine advertising in newspapers and magazines, and on television; relate to availability of goods and services, special offers, sales, and impulse buying.

Through class participation and committees pupils make an expense sheet for starting school and calculate expenses for a ninth grade girl for the year. Establish a list of fixed expenses to be on each list such as; lunch, transportation, etc. Compare total with the \$600 tax exemption allowed family for each member.

Revise list to come within the \$600.

By class discussion girls identify ways in which money income may be extended through the abilities and talents of an individual and through the care of properties.

Guidance Discussion Series, Set 4,  
McGraw-Hill

Society for Visual Education, Inc.

## AREA OF CONCERN: EFFECT OF TEEN AGE MARRIAGES ON FAMILY RELATIONS

## PUPIL BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES:

Recognizes both privileges and responsibilities of marriage

Analyzes personal attitudes about marriage

Examines effect of marriage on family social status, economic well being and individual educational goals

GENERALIZATIONSLEARNING EXPERIENCES

When one is willing to accept the responsibilities accompanying privileges of marriage, one is more likely to have a successful marriage.

One's attitude about marriage may be influenced by unrealistic expectations.

One's maturity and educational experiences are among determining factors in the probable success of marriage.

Pupils discuss a flip chart on "Invitation to Marriage" containing realistic and unrealistic marriage situations.

Pupils make lists of privileges and responsibilities of marriage. Use overhead projector for class discussion.

Pupils read, report, and discuss current articles on teen age marriages. Pupils analyze:  
 1 out of 3 teen age marriages ends in divorce  
 1 out of 70 college-graduate marriages ends in divorce  
 1 out of 270 marriages ends in divorce when the wife has a degree in Home Economics.<sup>1</sup>

## SUGGESTED VISUALS

"Looking Ahead to Marriage"

Marriage and Family Living Series, Society for Visual Education, Inc.

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<sup>1</sup> Billie Williamson, "Education and Success in Marriage," Tips and Topics in Home Economics, 7:6, October, 1966.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The family is basic to all types of social organization; it is the institution which concerns itself with the various statuses and roles of kinship organization. Much of what has been described as changes in American family structure and function is necessary adaptation to a culture now predominantly urban and technological rather than rural and agricultural.

Demands associated with occupational and geographical mobility have brought about a family pattern in urban areas consisting of relatively isolated nuclear family units which operate without much support from the kinship system.

The greatest influence on size of family is education. The decline in the size of the American family has been due to improved means of birth control, economic changes, and changes in attitudes and values.

Emphasis has shifted from the quantity of children produced to the quality of children raised. However, the child in the middle-class family may be so preoccupied with receiving from other people that the satisfaction of giving of self is excluded.

Each year more than a million homes are broken by divorce, separation, death or desertion. Some children suffer extreme trauma because of divorce. However, emotional divorce, not legal divorce, is the destroyer of children.

Although the family is the most important influence in the

development of youth, the school and other agencies have an increasingly important role to assume. Today's youth must be educated if they are to be the most effective parents of tomorrow.

Family living today requires more democratic contact between family members; individuals must learn new family roles, new patterns of interaction. The home economics teacher should be concerned with the kinds of family members her students are now and will be, with their growth and development toward independence, greater maturity, and with all phases of family living. New approaches may be needed in the teaching of family relations which emphasize successful families and family strengths.

The purposes of this study were: (1) to make a family background and interest survey of ninth grade girls enrolled in homemaking at Truesdell Junior High School, Wichita, Kansas: and (2) to plan a unit for teaching family relations in this school based on pupil needs.

A questionnaire was developed to survey general family situations and concerns for study in the family relations subject area. The questionnaire was administered by the investigator during class periods to the 135 girls enrolled in the six ninth grade homemaking classes at Truesdell. All of the questionnaires were considered usable by the investigator. The responses to each of the thirty-eight items on the questionnaire were tallied; and the data summarized, analyzed and reported.

Identified areas of concern were used in planning a revised unit for family relations for ninth grade at Truesdell Junior High School.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The family background of the 135 ninth grade girls enrolled in homemaking at Truesdell Junior High School indicated that over two-thirds were from families of biological origin while just under one-third were from broken homes or homes reconstituted by remarriage of divorced parents.

Broken or reconstituted families averaged one more child per family than did the families which had been held intact. Nearly all of the girls included in the study lived in single family dwellings with one or more brothers or sisters. While house size varied, over half contained six, seven or eight rooms.

The 135 ninth grade girls had completed more education than 14 per cent of their parents. Approximately two-thirds of the girls planned to complete some college training in addition to high school.

Approximately one-third of the fathers of the girls in the study worked day-time hours; one-third worked hours which varied from one shift to another, one-third worked hours which included evening and night hours. Slightly over half of the mothers were full-time homemakers. Of the parents who were employed, most worked at semi-skilled and skilled jobs. Those mothers who were employed outside the home generally worked during the day. A total of nineteen parents were employed in a professional occupation.

The evening meal was eaten as a family unit by 80 per cent of the families on school days and by 85 per cent on week ends and vacations. Less than 10 per cent of the girls indicated they never ate a meal as a

family unit.

Family dinners and gatherings with relatives centered around special holidays and special family days. Only 12 per cent of the girls indicated the family "seldom" or "never" had family gatherings.

Families of the girls were somewhat removed from relatives close enough for a visit without staying all night: 68 per cent reported no relatives on the father's side and 40 per cent reported no relatives on the mother's side living near. Over one-fourth of the girls saw their grandparents daily or once a week.

Girls included in the study invited their friends to their home more often than did their parents, and friends of the girls were more welcome to stop by without invitation than were friends of their parents.

The range of time the families had lived in the area was from five months to fifteen years. The greatest number of families had lived in the area for three years. While 28 per cent of the girls had never moved after starting first grade, 51 per cent of the girls had moved one to four times.

Twenty-seven per cent of the girls had attended only one grade school, however, 36 per cent of the girls had attended two grade schools. This could indicate that at least part of these girls were affected by changes of school boundary lines. Over half of the girls had attended only one junior high school.

Just under half of the families attended church as a family; however, over two-thirds of the girls attended church.

Sixty-two per cent of the families spent leisure time together.



Forty per cent of the girls participated in an organized recreation program. Over one-third took special lessons, with music lessons the most common response.

"Who does the work," created a conflict area in over half of the households. However, use of the telephone, grades, money management, teasing, dress styles, homework, discipline, and allowances created areas of conflict in over one-third of the households.

Fifty-four per cent of the girls indicated they expected to marry after high school and 34 per cent during or after college. Over two-thirds of the girls expected to work after marriage while the rest expected to be full time homemakers. Over one-third of the girls would like their marriage to be like that of their parents because it was obvious that their parents were happy together and seemed to understand each other and their children. Lack of satisfying interpersonal relationships, divorce, and tension created by arguments in the home were reasons why approximately two-thirds of the girls did not want their marriage to be like that of their parents.

Forty-two per cent of the girls indicated they would like the "atmosphere" in their home to be like that in their parents' home because they have fun together as a family and it is a happy home. Conflicting working schedules, disciplinary actions and lack of "togetherness" were reasons why the girls would not like their home to be like that of their parent's.

The combined ratings "very important" and "important" showed seven items to be of greatest concern for study in the family relations



area for over three-fourths of the girls: understanding parents, being recognized as an individual, needs of individual family members, money management for family, success of teen age marriages, effect of teen age marriages on families relations, and understanding brothers and sisters.

Of least concern to the girls in the study were the following items: how families develop a pattern of living, use of leisure time, changing roles of women, effect of moving, understanding grandparents, changing roles of men, how family customs change and customs other than their own.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Because ninth grade homemaking at Truesdell is an elective course the limited number in the sample may not have been an accurate indication of the family background of all pupils enrolled in Truesdell. The following conclusions are limited to the findings of the study.

The families were mainly intact nuclear families, living in single-family dwellings, with an average of 3.5 children per family. The number of intact families was slightly lower and the size of family approximately the same as the U.S. Census Population Report.

Families represented in the study followed the trend of living apart from relatives and had made frequent moves while establishing the family and position in the community.

The girls anticipated a greater educational level for themselves than had been attained by their parents. This may be a reflection of the greater emphasis on education today and a result of parents of

middle-class families desiring for their children a better education and thus more opportunities for employment than they had experienced. The number of colleges and special schools in the area may also have had some influence on the educational expectations of these girls.

Although 70 per cent of the girls were from intact families, less than half wanted their home to be like that of their parents. This response may have reflected both the stage of maturity of the girls and the number of girls from broken homes.

That girls this age are interested in developing satisfying family relationships was indicated by the areas of concern most often checked. A homemaking teacher should use this interest in planning family relations units which meet the needs of her students.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of the limited nature of this study the following recommendations are made:

1. Refine the questionnaire so it would be less time consuming and use at the beginning of each school year to determine interests of girls for planning family relations units.
2. Include opinions of parents in determining areas for study of family relations.
3. Use refined questionnaire to gather data from all Wichita ninth grade homemaking classes to provide basis for possible needed revision in family relations area in curriculum guide.
4. Make comparison of responses from girls from intact and from

broken homes to determine if differences in concerns for study of family relations exist.

5. Teach the unit and evaluate to determine how well the concerns of the girls were met.



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APPENDIX

## LET'S TAKE YOUR FAMILY MEASUREMENTS

Answers to these questions will enable your teacher to know more about you and your family. This is in no way a test. It is hoped that by taking a look into the families of Truesdell homemaking pupils our family relations unit may be revised to be more meaningful for future ninth grade pupils.

Please respond to each of the following questions by marking with a check (✓) or writing in a number. A space marked "other" has been provided in the event you wish to make additional responses or comments.

1. Which of these apply to you?

<input type="checkbox"/> Parents living together	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother not living
<input type="checkbox"/> Parents separated	<input type="checkbox"/> Father not living
<input type="checkbox"/> Parents divorced	

2. With whom do you live?

<input type="checkbox"/> Both parents	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mother	
<input type="checkbox"/> Father	
<input type="checkbox"/> Stepmother	
<input type="checkbox"/> Stepfather	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other relative	Please indicate relationship _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Guardian	
<input type="checkbox"/> Foster parents	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	Please indicate _____

3. How many brothers or sisters do you have? (Including stepbrothers, stepsisters, halfbrothers and halvesisters.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Number of older brothers	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of younger brothers
<input type="checkbox"/> Number of older sisters	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of younger sisters

4. How many are now living in your home?

<input type="checkbox"/> Sisters	<input type="checkbox"/> Halfsisters	<input type="checkbox"/> Other relatives
<input type="checkbox"/> Brothers	<input type="checkbox"/> Halfbrothers	<input type="checkbox"/> Others _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Stepsisters	<input type="checkbox"/> Grandmothers	
<input type="checkbox"/> Stepbrothers	<input type="checkbox"/> Grandfathers	

5. In what kind of a home do you live?

<input type="checkbox"/> Single family house	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile home
<input type="checkbox"/> Duplex	<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel
<input type="checkbox"/> Apartment	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

6. How many rooms in your home--counting bathrooms?

\_\_\_ Number of rooms

7. What schooling did each of your parents have?

Father    Mother

___	___	Less than grade 8 completed	
___	___	Completed grade 8	
___	___	Attended but did not complete high school	
___	___	High school graduate	
___	___	Junior college graduate	
___	___	Attended but did not complete 4-year college	
___	___	4-year college graduate	
___	___	Business college	
___	___	Nurse's training	
___	___	Beauty school	
___	___	Special school	Please indicate: Father _____

Mother \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. How much schooling do you plan to complete? .

___ Grade 9	___ Business college
___ High school	___ Nurse's training
___ Junior college	___ Beauty school
___ 4-year college	___ Other _____

9. What kind of work does your father (stepfather) do?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 What hours per day does he work? (First shift? 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.?)

10. What kind of work does your mother (stepmother) do?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 What hours per day does she work? (First shift? 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.?)

11. What meals do you eat together as a family?

On a school day

On a week end or during the summer

 Breakfast  
 Evening meal

 Breakfast  
 Noon meal  
 Evening meal

12. How often do you eat away from home as a family?

 Daily  
 More than twice a week  
 Twice a week  
 Once a week

 Twice a month  
 Once a month  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

13. How often do you have family dinners or "get together" with relatives?

 Special holidays (Thanksgiving, Christmas)  
 Special family days (Birthdays, Mother's Day)  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

14. Which of these relatives live near enough that you see them for a visit without staying all night?

Father's side of family

Mother's side of family

 Grandparents  
 Aunts  
 Uncles  
 Cousins

 Grandparents  
 Aunts  
 Uncles  
 Cousins

15. How often do you see any of your grandparents?

 Daily  
 Once a week  
 Every two weeks  
 Once a month

 Twice a year  
 Vacations only  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

16. How often do you invite
- your
- friends to your house?

 Indicate times per week (or how often) \_\_\_\_\_

17. Are your friends welcome to stop by your home without invitation?

 Yes     No

18. How often do your parents invite
- their
- friends to your house?

 Indicate how often \_\_\_\_\_

19. Do friends of your parent's "drop in" without invitation?

 Yes     No

20. How many years has your family lived in Wichita?

\_\_\_ Write in the number

21. How many years has your family lived in this area of Wichita?

\_\_\_ Write in the number

22. How often have you moved since you started to school in first grade?

\_\_\_ Write in the number

23. How many schools have you attended?

\_\_\_ Number of grade schools

\_\_\_ Number of junior high schools

24. How do you usually get to and from school?

\_\_\_ Walk

\_\_\_ Family car

\_\_\_ Car pool

\_\_\_ Ride bus

\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

25. Does your family usually attend church together?

\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

26. Do you attend church?

\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

27. How many years has your family been members of the church you now attend?

\_\_\_ Attend but are not members

\_\_\_ Less than 1 year

\_\_\_ 2 to 4 years

\_\_\_ 5 to 9 years

\_\_\_ 10 to 15 years

\_\_\_ More than 15 years

28. How do you spend your leisure time?

Winter

Summer

29. Does your family spend leisure time together?  Yes  No

If yes, how do they spend this leisure time?

Winter

Summer

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

30. Do you or other members of your family take part in an organized recreation program? (Swimming, sailing, bowling, etc. )

Yes  No

If yes, what kind of program?

YOU

OTHER MEMBERS of FAMILY

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

31. Do you or other members of your family take any special lessons? (Piano, ceramics, etc.)

Yes  No

YOU

OTHER MEMBERS of FAMILY

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

32. When do you expect to be married?

Within the next year

After college

During high school

Never

After high school

During college

33. Would you like your marriage to be like that of your parents?

Yes  No

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

34. Would you like the general atmosphere or "pattern of living" of your home to be like that found in your parent's home?

Yes  No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

35. Do you expect to have a job outside the home after you marry?

Yes  No

36. Which of these create (or have created) problems in your home now?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental illness of a family member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Separation of parents   | <input type="checkbox"/> Disabling illness of:             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Desertion of a parent   | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Death of a parent   | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Involuntary separation of parents (father in service, transferred on job, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Brother or Stepbrother            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money management  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sister or Stepsister              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expenses connected with moving  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other relative                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical bills   | <input type="checkbox"/> Alcoholism                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dental bills  | <input type="checkbox"/> Hobbies                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other financial problems  | <input type="checkbox"/> Grades                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Type of employment  | <input type="checkbox"/> Special lessons                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Size of house   | <input type="checkbox"/> Who does the work (dishes etc.)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Location of house   | <input type="checkbox"/> Teasing                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your friends  | <input type="checkbox"/> Going steady                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent's friends  | <input type="checkbox"/> Use of radio, record player       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparents  | <input type="checkbox"/> Use of T V                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other relatives   | <input type="checkbox"/> Use of telephone                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non relatives living in house   | <input type="checkbox"/> Doing homework                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors   | <input type="checkbox"/> Allowance                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Routine of family members (must sleep days, etc.)                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal money to spend           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious differences of parents  | <input type="checkbox"/> Hair styles                       |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Dress styles                      |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> General personal appearance       |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Discipline                        |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Household regulations             |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                       |





CONCERNS OF NINTH GRADE GIRLS FOR STUDY  
IN FAMILY RELATIONS

by

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B. S., Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, 1950

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

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A questionnaire was developed to survey general family situations and concerns for study in the family relations subject area, and was administered to the 135 ninth grade girls enrolled in six homemaking classes at Truesdell Junior High School, Wichita, Kansas.

Major findings of the study were: The majority of the girls were from intact families that contained an average of one less child per family than did broken or reconstituted families. These families lived in single family dwellings containing only the nuclear family. No girl expected to complete less than a high school education and over half expected to have educational training in addition to high school. Slightly over half of the mothers were full-time homemakers; parents were employed mostly as semi-skilled or skilled workers. Slightly over three-fourths of the girls expected to marry: half after high school, one-third during or after college; only one-third would like their marriage to be like their parents' marriage. Items of greatest concern for study in family relations were: understanding parents, being recognized as an individual, needs of individual family members, money management for family, success of teen age marriages, effect of teen age marriages on families relations, and understanding brothers and sisters.

A family relations unit was developed around the areas of concern identified in the study.